

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-03 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3980

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SINGAPORE 4998

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: CASC, SNAR, SN

SUBJECT: SINGAPORE IMPOSES DEATH PENALTY FOR HEROIN TRAFFICKING

1. SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT INTRODUCED LEGISLATION ON NOVEMBER 11 TO STIFFEN PENALTIES FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING. UNDER THE NEW LAW, WHICH WILL PROBABLY TAKE EFFECT EITHER IN DECEMBER OR EARLY 1976 AT THE LATEST, ANY PERSON IN POSSESSION OF MORE THAN TWO GRAMS OF HEROIN IS PRESUMED TO BE TRAFFICKING, UNLESS PROVEN OTHERWISE. MINIMUM PENALTY FOR HEROIN TRAFFICKING IS FIVE YEARS AND FIVE STROKES. FOR TRAFFICKER IN POSSESSION OF 10-15 GRAMS HEROIN, MINIMUM PENALTY IS 20 YEARS AND 15 STROKES. MAXIMUM IS 30 YEARS AND 15 STROKES. TRAFFICKERS IN POSSESSION OF MORE THAN 15 GRAMS HEROIN ARE SUBJECT TO MANDATORY DEATH PENALTY.

2. EXISTING SECTION OF LAW WHICH PRESUMES THAT ANY PERSON POSSESSING MORE THAN 15 GRAMS OF CANNABIS IS TRAFFICER HAS NOT BEEN ALTERED. UNDER NEW LAW, MINIMUM PENALTY FOR CANNABIS TRAFFICKING IS THREE YEARS AND THREE STROKES. MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR TRAFFICER POSSESSING LESS THAN 10 KILOS CANNABIS IS 20 YEARS AND 10 STROKES. TRAFFICERS IN POSSESSION OF MORE THAN
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10 KILOS ARE SUBJECT TO MINIMUM PENALTY OF 20 YEARS AND

15 STROKES. MAXIMUM IS 30 YEARS AND 15 STROKES.

3. MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR UNAUTHORIZED POSSESSION OF LESS THAN 2 GRAMS OF HEROIN AND LESS THAN 15 GRAMS OF CANNABIS IS 10 YEARS OR S\$20,000 OR BOTH. THERE IS NO MINIMUM SENTENCE FOR PERSONS CONVICTED OF POSSESSING THESE SMALL AMOUNTS EXCEPT FOR SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE WHEN THE MINIMUM PENALTY IS 2 YEARS OR S\$4,000 OR BOTH.

4. COMMENT: SINGAPORE IS IN THE MIDST OF A FULL SCALE NUMBER 3 HEROIN EPIDEMIC. OVER 1,000 HEROIN OFFENDERS WERE ARRESTED IN FIRST HALF OF 1975. COMPARABLE FIGURE FOR 1974 ENTIRE YEAR WAS 110. GOS HAS IN RESPONSE ADOPTED THESE STRICT NEW PENALTIES TO DETER TRAFFICKERS. IMPETUS FOR NEW LAW UNDOUBTEDLY CAME FROM PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW HIMSELF, WHO IN RECENT COVERATION WITH AMBASSADOR INDICATED THAT DEATH PENALTY WOULD BE IMPOSED ON TRAFFICKERS.

5. GIVEN THE CONTINUING USE OF NUMBER 3 HEROIN AND MARIJUANA BY A SMALL SEGMENT OF THE AMERICAN TEENAGE POPULATION, FREQUENT U.S. NAVY SHIP VISITS, AND FACT THAT ABOUT 100,000 AMERICAN TOURISTS VISIT SINGAPORE ANNUALLY, DRUG ARRESTS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS ARE LIKELY TO OCCUR IN THE FUTURE. EMBASSY WILL PLACE PROMINENT SIGN IN CONSULAR SECTION TO INFORM AMERICANS OF STIFF PENALTIES. EMBASSY IS MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF SINGAPORE AMERICAN SCHOOL, SINGAPORE AMERICAN COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL AND AMERICAN BUSINESS COUNDCIL TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS RAISED BY THIS LEGISLATION AND VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL AND PREVENTIVE PROGRAMS IN THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY WHICH WILL HOPEFULLY MINIMIZE BUT UNFORTUNATELY PROBABLY NOT ELIMINATE THE POTENTIAL PROBLEM. COPY OF THE NEW LEGISLATION FOLLOWS BY POUCH.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

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